1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

601 *Watʃitʃio* is seldom used as a term of address. A child will call his *watʃitʃio* by the same term of address as he uses for his mother —*na*—and may refer to her, in speaking to a third person, as *tʃinanē* (my mother), while she, for her part, may call him *bai'i pio* (my child), but without showing him any of the endearments which normally accompany the *tʃina- : bai'i* relationship. It will be remembered that she belongs to the same generation as the women he refers to as *tʃina-*. This term seems to be in more general use in everyday life, *watʃitʃio* being a more formal mode of reference especially required on ceremonial occasions, and for this reason it was some time before I appreciated its importance.

604 It is tempting to speculate on the meaning of this relationship between a woman and the children of her cross-cousins, with such strong taboos attached to it. I do not know of any similar stress laid on this tie elsewhere. It seems just possible that it may be a relic of some marriage system formerly obtaining, in which the cross-cousin was the preferred mate, as is the case in many Melanesian communities. But I have no actual evidence or information in support of this theory, and it would not account for the inclusion of the children of female cross-cousins (i.e. the children of the father's sister's daughter and the mother's brother's daughter).[1]

604 I should like tentatively to suggest another explanation. If
585 reference be made to the account of the marriage ceremony on
852 p. 91, and of the various ceremonies performed for a child described on p. 186 (no. 3), on p. 187 (no. 5), and on p. 189 (no. 7), it will be seen that the individual's *watʃitʃio* takes a prominent part in each, and that her role seems to be either to impersonate the child (as in the ceremony for first placing on the ground, where the *watʃitʃio* is decorated with the same kind of leaves as is the child himself), or, on other occasions, to act as a substitute for the child, undertaking first the action he is about to engage upon, as if to interpose herself between him and the danger involved in so doing. For example, in the ceremony for first being carried on his mother's pack, one of his *watʃitʃio*, after being carried in this way by another woman, herself carries the child on the same pack,

[1] Mrs. Seligman has drawn my attention to the fact that marriage with the daughter of the female cross-cousin is an essential feature of Ambrym culture (see A. Bernard Deacon, 'The Regulation of Marriage in Ambrym', *J.R.A.I.* lvii, pp. 325 et seq.). In Ambrym marriage with the widow of the mother's brother is also allowed. The same term is, however, not used for mother's brother's wife and for child of the cross-cousin as in North Bougainville.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

temporarily setting aside the taboo on physical contact. Again, in the marriage ceremony, the imitation of the sexual act gone through with one another by the women who stand in that relationship to the bridegroom might be interpreted as taking over to themselves the danger attaching to entry into the married state. This would account for the prohibition against personal contact and also for the strong taboo against marriage. But the natives never at any time made any comments which would suggest that such an idea was involved, and this interpretation of the function of the *watʃitʃio* is therefore hypothetical only.

10. *Tsubu- : tsubna'in.*

All the grandparents, on both sides of the house, and of both sexes, come under the designation *tsubunē*, and any ancestor farther back than the grandparental generation is given the same appellation. Similarly, all the grandchildren are referred to as *tsubna'in pio*, which also embraces great-grandchildren, though it would appear to be rare for a native to live to be old enough to see the children of the fourth descending generation. Neither *tsubunē* nor *tsubna'in* is a term of address, *bubu* being used instead of both of them when speaking directly to the relative concerned.

This is a very close and affectionate relationship, even more than is commonly the case between grandparent and grandchild among ourselves. No taboos or restrictions of any sort are attached to it. As usual, the relatives on the mother's side, especially the mother's mother, stand closer to the child than do the other people to whom he applies the term, but, as usual, much depends on proximity. The grandparents take a large part in looking after the children while they are small, especially when they become of an age to be left at home when the mother goes to the taro garden, or when she has a yet smaller infant to tend. One old man at Kurtatchi was always to be seen with his grandchild on his back, and when the young family went off to visit their other relations he wandered about quite disconsolately waiting for their return; he was typical of many. It is the duty of the grandchildren to care for their grandparents in old age. There were two blind women at Kurtatchi who were always attended and led about by their small granddaughters. The relationship might also be illustrated by plentiful examples from my collection of tales.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

III

MARRIAGE AND SEX RELATIONS

124 585 [797] NO marriages took place at Kurtatchi during the nine months of my residence. Had there been any, they would have been conducted according to the rites of the Roman Catholic Church, since the village now has a resident native Mission teacher. If I had gone there a month or two earlier, I should have been able to witness the final stages of the marriage of Kakari, Pinari's nephew and heir, to Muben, a girl of rank from the village of Baniu, but I did not hear of this until too late. The account here given was obtained from a group of people who had themselves taken part in the events they described, of which at least the marriage ceremony itself was sufficiently recent to be clearly remembered. It was told in public, the audience, as usual, chiming in at intervals to add some detail omitted by the narrators. During visits to other villages, I obtained what information I could about the ritual as performed there, thus eliciting some local differences which are noted in their appropriate places. The main lines of the procedure are, however, similar throughout the area dealt with in this book. I was able to be present at some of the preliminary proceedings conducted on behalf of different individuals, but for the sequence of events and for the bulk of the detail I have been obliged to rely on my informants.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS LEADING UP TO MARRIAGE

584 [436] A boy may be betrothed even before he has put on the *upi*, i.e. when he is less than seven or eight years old, and a girl when still quite a baby. The boy's father makes a series of visits to various villages, and when he finds a girl who takes his fancy, he brings a spear, puts a string of *beroan* (ceremonial currency of shell disks, see p. 446 and Pl. 67) round it, and offers it to the girl's mother. If the betrothal meets with her approval, she takes the spear and puts it up in the rafters of her hut, where it remains as a sign that the girl is promised. The father of the boy and the mother of the girl chew the betel-mixture together, and arrange a time when the boy's mother will go and chew betel in the girl's village. The boy

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

583 595 the young wife of Wasē, aged perhaps ten (Pl. 7*b*), was thus living in Wasē's hut at the time of my residence.

THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY

● 586 No further ceremony takes place until the girl has 'grown big'. Some people wait until she has menstruated for the first time before they hold the feast at which she is given to her husband, sometimes it is held before she has menstruated, in which case the husband does not wait for this to happen before consummating the marriage.

585 285 [386] [438] When the time for this feast is getting near, all the women *kōma* (dance and yell, see p. 414). At first they *kōma* without feasting for several nights. They prepare baskets to hold the food to be used in the ceremony. These are made of a kind of rattan cane dyed red (*riri*). The coastal people are obliged to buy this red cane from the people of the mountains, who alone know the secret of the dye. The baskets are trimmed with *beroan* round the edges, and trade beads are hung over them. Before they had any trade beads they used dogs' teeth for this purpose. The baskets are also trimmed with all sorts of aromatic plants and leaves. The boy's mother makes one basket, the girl's mother makes another. The general name for these baskets is *seban*; the special name for baskets made by the people of the Nakarib clan is *kuwir* or *kuwirtsun*, for those of the Naboin clan *popalat*. When the baskets are finished, all the women come with them and hang them up on the branch of a tree, then the women take bows and arrows, paddles, axes, &c., and jump about (*sani*) waving them, and the slit-gong is beaten.

585 When the time for the feast is close at hand, the basket made by the boy's mother is taken down and put in her hut. The girl's people come and fetch it, bringing in exchange the basket made by the girl's mother. This is a sign that the girl's mother has enough pigs and other food for the marriage ceremony. They take back the basket made by the boy's mother, which remains for a while at the house of the girl's mother, and the women of the girl's village go through the same performance with the bows and arrows and paddles.

[417] Meanwhile, the people of the boy's village have been making a platform (*tiwan*) out of split areca-palm trunks. The men make it in the bush, and leave it on the road close to the village. The women of the village go, singing, and ornament it with flowers and

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

aromatic leaves. Then they bring it into the village and put it in the hut of the boy's mother. The boy's mother catches a pig and cooks it. The men and women who helped with the platform must be given pig to eat all together. The platform is laid down inside the house.

Then all the women who stand in the relation of *watʃitʃio* to the boy (see Chap. II, p. 68, for this relationship) go and lie on the platform in couples, holding each other fast. Each couple pretends to be husband and wife, who play at copulating with each other. When one couple has been lying on the platform for a while they get up and another pair take their places, till all the boy's *watʃitʃio* have taken part in the performance.

When this is finished, all the men and women of the boy's village adorn themselves with paint and put on the mark called *wakai*—a line of white outlining the edge of the hair and the forehead. Then they all go to the girl's village. They *kōma* along the road. The people of the girl's village have been similarly adorning themselves and they also *kōma*. They ornament the girl with the *wakai* line and with a clam-shell nose ornament, and hang strings of *beroan* across her shoulders and round her waist.

The people from the boy's village reach the girl's village just after dark. They *kōma* as they come. They join in the *kōma* at the girl's village. All the people of both villages stand up together and *kōma*. But the boy and the girl do not join in it, they hide in different huts, and are not allowed to come out. The boy's mother joins in the *kōma*, but the girl's mother stays with her daughter inside her own hut. This goes on all night.

Just before dawn breaks, one of the girl's male relatives takes up the boy on his shoulder (*watok*). This duty must not be performed by the girl's *tsoa*, who is *waris* to the girl's husband and cannot touch him. It is usually undertaken by one of the men who will be *tauvē* to the husband, i.e. his wife's brother, blood or classificatory. He is assisted by men of the boy's clan, who place their hands under the boy's buttocks and take some of the weight. The corresponding relative of the boy, who is *tauvē* to the girl, i.e. her husband's sister, takes up the girl on her shoulders in the same way, and is similarly assisted by members of the girl's clan. The heads of both boy and girl are ornamented with cock's feathers, and strings of *beroan* are hung across their shoulders. *Beroan* is also hung over both the wrists of the boy, but not of the girl.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

585 The boy and the girl are then supposed to weep, the girl a great deal, the boy only a little; he must shed tears but must not cry aloud, he would be ashamed to do so. Some boys do not weep at all.

They are carried round in *kōma* formation, accompanied by all the other people. They go round once only, then the girl is taken back to her own hut, and the boy to the hut he slept in the night before. This may be the *tobar* (boys' house), but if he has friends in the village he may sleep with them.

When the sun is well up they all *kōma* again, the couple being carried as before.

585 417 A platform has been prepared beforehand, made of areca-palm planks, and laid on the *tagoan* of the girl's mother's hut. It is ornamented with flowers and aromatic plants, canarium almond and sugar-cane, &c., and is covered with women's hoods. A fence is set up round it, made of coco-nut palm leaves, so that it is all enclosed.

585 When the *kōma* is finished, and the couple have been carried round once again, all the people who will in future stand to the boy in the relation of *waris* (his wife's parents, actual and classificatory) sit down on the ground in two lines opposite to each other, with their legs stretched out so that the soles of the feet of those composing one line are touching the soles of the feet of the people in the other line. The rest of the people keep up the *kōma*. The bridal pair are carried round the dancers once, then they are set down, and must walk along the line of outstretched legs.

After this the bridal pair and those accompanying them go inside the enclosure. The relative of the girl who has been carrying the boy sits down on the platform that has been prepared inside the enclosure, and takes the boy on his knees. Then the relative of the boy who previously carried the girl sits down beside him and takes the girl on her knees. The two sit side by side, close together. All the women put on their hoods. From now onwards the rules of avoidance between the husband and his wife's parents (*waris*), and between the parents of husband and parents of wife (*suvan*), must be observed. (For these see Chap. II, pp. 72–5.) Then 585 the boy's father takes the girl's legs and lays them across the legs of 184 the boy, so that the boy's legs are underneath and the girl's over them. In an account obtained from Tabut it was said that the boy's father takes one of the girl's legs and lays it across the boy, and then takes one of the boy's legs and lays it across the girl, so

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

that the legs are intertwined. This may be a local difference; the account was quite clear and definite in both cases. At Tabut there was added: 'Then they all talk to the girl, and tell her: "Now you know how to hold your husband's skin, you must not be ashamed any more now."'

Then the boy's mother's brother (at Tabut they said any of the older men of the village would do as well) takes a piece of pig out of the ceremonial basket (*seban*), cuts off a bit, and holds it to the mouth of the girl; she must only smell it, not bite it. Then he puts it to the mouth of the boy in the same way. Neither of them must actually touch the meat. Then he puts the meat back into the *seban*. Then he takes a coco-nut shell full of water, and holds it to the girl's mouth, but she must not drink any of it. In the same way he holds it to the boy's mouth. He then takes areca-nuts and pepper-stick. He breaks one areca-nut in half. One half is given to the boy, who hands it to the girl. She bites off a piece with her teeth, and gives the rest back to the boy. Then the pepper-stick is dipped into the lime-pot, and the boy gives it to the girl, who eats part of it. What remains is dipped again into the lime, and the girl gives it to the boy, who must chew it. If he is not shy he manages to chew all of it, but sometimes he is so shy he cannot chew, and it remains in his mouth.

Then the women who are the boy's *waris*, who have been sitting on the ground all this time with their hoods over their faces, are told to lift up the hoods and look at their son-in-law so that they will know him. 'Look in the face of your *waris*, it won't do for you to go making some other man think you are his *waris*.' Then the young couple untwine their legs and get down off the knees of their respective *taurē*. Then a man goes to the slit-gong and beats it with a succession of short quick beats, thus:

. . . . . .

The other men blow on the Pan-pipes, and the women *kōma*. The *seban* are hung up in the rafters. Food is distributed.

After this the boy gets up and goes off at once to his own village. The girl waits till all the women belonging to the boy's village are ready, then the boy's mother, who is *ruanbē* to the girl, carries her pick-a-back. All the men and women relatives of the boy go along with them, and come to their own village. As soon as they arrive, a big feast is made for the young married couple. All the food is

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

585 put on the platform that was previously prepared in the boy's mother's hut. All the kinsmen of the boy, male and female, who belong to the same clan (that is, all the members of his lineage) go and eat with the young couple, and they can bring in any one they wish, irrespective of clan. They eat all the food that was given them at the girl's village, which the women have brought back with them. The young couple really eat this time, instead of pretending.

Then the married pair lie down together on one bed[1] inside the boy's mother's hut and the marriage is consummated. My informants ended their account by saying: 'The man wants the woman all the time, they have connexion again and again, they go on all the time, they cannot sleep.'

585 184 The account given at Tabut differs somewhat from the preceding one obtained at Kurtatchi. Apart from the details previously mentioned, the ceremony is described as taking place at the boy's village, and after it, all the boy's *waris* go back to their own village, while the girl stays with her husband, and is supposed to cry for her mother—some really cry, some only pretend. When the sun goes down, the young couple are told to go into the boy's mother's hut and eat the taro that they will find there. Not many people are there, only the boy's mother and his grandmother. The boy's grandmother tells the girl: 'Now you must not be ashamed before your husband any more.' Then she tells the boy: 'And you, you must not be ashamed before your wife. You two can sleep together on one bed now, and can eat together out of one basket of taro.' Then the two eat, the boy eats first and the girl after him. They eat a piece of pig and a piece of taro. The boy bites off a piece and then gives the rest to the girl. This is to signify that, in future, when the husband eats, he will not finish all the food, but will leave some for his wife, who must finish it, and the girl must take care to provide the man with plenty of food. 'Then the two lie together and have sexual intercourse, they laugh on the bed, they play with each other and talk, and chew the betel-mixture, they 532 do not sleep.'

184 On the Lontis coast, north-western Buka, when a woman who 565 is *taunaun* marries and is escorted to her husband's hut—or rather 585 to his mother's hut, where they will live at first, in most instances—

[513]

[1] In the ordinary way man and wife occupy separate planks, with the usual space between for a smouldering fire.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 8

532
585

a b

a. FEMALE FIGURE USED IN MARRIAGE CEREMONY, BUKA
b. MALE FIGURE, CICATRIZED

[facing p. 94]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

she is preceded by a man carrying a wooden figure (*kaisa*) representing a woman, carved out of soft wood, about three feet high, and realistically painted, no physical features being omitted. A long pole-like handle is carved in one piece with the figure, by means of which the figure is carried on high like a standard. It is set down beside the door of the hut, and after the bride has gone in, it is taken to the *tobar* belonging to the men of the bridegroom's mother's clan, and carefully stored there. This figure, although that of an adult, represents the woman's future child; its purpose is to ensure that she will soon conceive. It is female because it is desirable that her first child shall be a girl. Female children are much desired in this community because, descent being matrilineal, the children of a woman who is *tsunaun* will themselves be *tsunaun* and carry on the line, whatever the position of their father. When once the figure is placed in the *tobar* it may not be taken out again, for if a woman were to see it the child would die. It remains in the *tobar* until the child is fully grown, when it is destroyed. But the hold of this belief is weakening, and on my expressing a desire to purchase one such figure which was shown to me, I was permitted to do so, on condition that I carried it away carefully swathed in wrappings, and did not allow any of the native women to see it, a promise which I took care to keep. It is reproduced in Pl. 8*a*.

There are certain men who know how to carve these figures. Unless the bridegroom's family numbers one of these among its members, they have to pay one string of *beroan* and give a pig to the man who makes it, or they may pay another six strings of *beroan* in lieu of the pig.

The use of these figures is rapidly dying out on the island of Buka and its adjacent islets, owing to discouragement by the missionaries on the ground that they are obscene. On Bougainville, very similar figures are made for use in the *watawutf* ceremony (see Pl. 28), but so far as I could ascertain they are not used in the marriage rites in that region.

SUMMARY OF EVENTS LEADING UP TO MARRIAGE

Occasion	*Transactions*
1. Betrothal, when both are children, the girl often quite a baby.	Father of boy presents spear hung with one string of *beroan* to mother of girl. Betel-mixture chewed.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

Occasion.	*Transactions.*
10. Marriage ceremony. Usually not until boy has taken off *upi* and girl has been through her first menstruation ceremony.	Exchange of ceremonial baskets of taro. Much food given by bride's mother to bridegroom's relatives.

585

MARRIAGE PAYMENTS

583

It is recommended in *Notes and Queries* (1929 ed., p. 101) that the investigator should 'employ the native term in describing or referring to payments or gifts made by the groom or his group to the father or group of the bride'. Among the people of North Bougainville there would appear to be no special designation for this transaction. Since it always takes the form of strings of *imun* or *bevoan*, which I have described as 'ceremonial currency' (for reasons given in Chapter XII), I have used this phrase in connexion with the marriage payments, supplementing it, where the context seemed to render this advisable, by the words 'handed over in respect of a wife'. This is, admittedly, clumsy, but it states exactly what takes place, without begging the question of its significance, while none of the more convenient expressions proposed in the extensive correspondence that has been going on over this matter seems to be entirely without objection. (See *Man*, 1929–33, *passim*.)

[436]

In the area with which this book is concerned, neither the ritual nor the social aspects of the situation seem to be considered of importance. The currency which changes hands is definitely not a symbolical token marking 'the sealing of a contract', nor is it an 'indemnity' or 'payment of compensation to a group that loses a member'. The many discussions I had with the natives, both men and women, leave me in no doubt whatever that they do, actually, regard it as a financial transaction exactly on the same lines as any other purchase, but of more importance than most, the use of ceremonial currency being confined to very special occasions (see Chap. XII, pp. 446–9). Nowadays, actual coin sometimes changes hands instead of strings of shell disks and teeth. One father of my acquaintance demanded £10 in shillings for his daughter, which her suitor thought was too dear! The word for the handing over of the currency, *wen*, is the same as that which is used for 'pay' in speaking of any commercial transaction involving ordinary buying and selling (which in this community is usually performed through the medium of barter). In speaking of illicit

[437]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

though he did not know why. Her relatives would not consent to the match, they said her husband might want her back. As it was near the end of my period of residence, I did not hear whether anything further was done in the matter. In another case, in which all the principals were personally known to me, that of Kakari's marriage to Muben, the match was suggested by Muben's *tsoa* (actually the mother's mother's sister's son, but equivalent to the mother's brother). He lived at Kurtatchi, but actually belonged to Baniu, where Muben's mother lived. He was very ambitious, and clearly wanted the marriage because it allied him to the most important family in the district. That is to say, while the initiative usually rests with the boy's family, it may, on occasion, be taken by some relative of the bride's. Again, Pinari, who liked to exercise his authority, saw to it that he had a say in the case of betrothals of any of the young people in his village, even of those not closely related to him, and as he was *tsunaun tʃan*, deference was paid to his views.

The betrothal is not absolutely binding until the ceremonial currency has been handed over by the boy's people. This may be done while the girl is still quite small, but it is not necessary, or usual, to do so until her breasts begin to develop. Once arranged, a betrothal is seldom broken, even before the currency has changed hands, and to break it after that is a serious matter. A case came to my notice where a man fell in love with a girl who was already betrothed, and eventually ran away with her. Although the ceremonial exchanges connected with the prospective marriage had not been completed, the affair was regarded as a serious breach of customary rule, but it was finally settled by a payment of ceremonial currency from the lover to the girl's affianced husband. The couple have been living very happily together for several years. They have one child, a boy about a year old, whom both adore. It seems to be a genuine love match, a somewhat rare occurrence among these people.

At the time of betrothal, the boy may be considerably older than the girl, and may have finished his puberty ceremonies and taken off the *upi*, or he may be only slightly older and continue to wear the *upi* for several years subsequently. All except the youngest boys wearing the *upi* at Kurtatchi were already betrothed. The marriage is never consummated till the puberty ceremonies are finished and the *upi* removed, and usually not until the girl has

582 experienced her first menstruation, though there appear to be
585 some exceptions to this latter rule. A youth who is *tsunaun* will
565 have more than one wife assigned to him at an early age. They
582 are called husband and wife from the time of betrothal. Kiram,
595 a lad of fourteen or fifteen, had for his first 'wife' Tagoal, a girl of perhaps ten or twelve (see Pl. 7 *a*). For her the ceremonial currency had been handed over. His second 'wife', Buin, was about seven or eight, and was still spending most of her time with her mother, the currency not having changed hands as yet.

574 During the years between betrothal and the marriage ceremony,
584 the girl pays long and frequent visits to her husband's people, or
883 may, in some cases, be taken over by them altogether, particularly if her mother is not living. But if the boy still wears the *upi*, they are kept rigorously apart; there is no chance of their getting to know each other at all, and when the time comes for the marriage to be consummated they are still practically strangers. Some girls fret a good deal on their visits to their 'in-laws', others appear to settle down quite happily. As regards the routine of her life, the early betrothal makes little difference to a girl. She works for her husband's people instead of for her own, and looks after his babies, if he is already married, instead of the babies of her mother's family. She is, as a rule, well treated by her prospective mother-in-law, and drops into place with the girls of her own age in the village, who treat her as one of themselves.

BEGINNING OF MARRIED LIFE

591 After the final marriage ceremony, the young couple usually settle down near the husband's people, sometimes actually in his mother's hut, to begin with. Kakari and Muben were still living with Matēv nine months after their marriage, in spite of Matēv's repeated hints that it was time he built a hut for himself in the vacant space next to hers. But sometimes, under pressure from the girl's people, the couple will live in her village, especially if she be a person of importance. There are enough instances of both practices to suggest that it is not correct to describe these natives as either 'matri-' or 'patrilocal', but that there is freedom of choice, with the balance towards the custom of living in the village which was the husband's home before marriage. In either case, they will, in years to come, spend a certain amount of time in the village which was the home of the other partner.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

HOMOSEXUALITY

838 [538] Homosexual practices figure in some of the stories, in each case on the part of males. From discussions arising out of these it would appear that homosexuality is actually found among these people, but is rare, and is regarded with intense disfavour. At the end of one such story, told by a young woman, the names of two men, one dead, one living in another village, were mentioned, and also that of the father of a Kurtatchi boy who had been forced to yield to the former, when he was an old man too feeble to resist. The natives said that such people were *pipiu*, a word which from [732] its use in other connexions appears to mean 'mad', though it was also applied to a boy who was deaf and dumb. In one story homo- [762] sexual behaviour started after recovery from an illness, and the man finally committed suicide by jumping from a cliff. It was related as a fact, with the statement that it happened not long ago.

It is known that homosexual practices occur on the plantations, where indentured men may spend three years in 'quarters' without women. Some of the older people told me they did not like their young men to sign on for this reason. It would seem probable that the segregation of the boys wearing the *upi* might have similar consequences, especially considering the very intimate contact in which they live with the older men acting as their *amro* (see pp. 198–9) during their period of seclusion in the bush. But my informants [839] asserted emphatically that this was not the case, although masturbation was freely admitted. It is at least safe to say that homosexual [881] practices do not form part of the puberty ritual, nor do they enter, so far as I could ascertain, into any other ceremonial observances among these people.

The conventional attitude towards homosexuality in this community is definitely one of condemnation. I do not know how far the assertion that manifestations of it occur but rarely may have been due to this, but the impression I received from the reactions of the natives during discussions on the subject was that the disapproval was more than the expression of the orthodox point of view.

[585 881] Imitations of the sexual act are carried out between women at a certain stage in the marriage ceremonies (see p. 91) and in those marking the first menstruation of a girl who is *tsunaun*. These are

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

881 and in the ceremony as I saw it, the time during which the girl remained in her mother's hut was only five days. But in discussion, informants told me that she used to remain in her mother's hut for one month after the first discovery of the flux. At Saposa, also, the longer interval was given.

881 184 532 585 At Saposa there is a further elaboration. A wooden figure, life-size or larger, is carved out of soft wood, to represent a girl ornamented as she would be for this ceremony, with her hair dressed and painted, and a tortoise-shell filigree ornament round her neck. The pattern of the cicatrization on her body is also indicated. This figure is kept in her mother's hut during the period of her seclusion. It appears also at her wedding. One such figure, which I saw [768] during a brief visit to Saposa, had been made for a girl who had died; it was to be burnt after a suitable interval with other of her belongings (Pl. 32).

WOMEN'S VIEWS ON MENSTRUATION

841 The reason given by the natives for holding the ceremony above described is one which I have not seen put forward elsewhere, namely, to ensure that the girl does not menstruate too frequently or too freely. All the details of the ritual appeared to be directed towards this end, e.g. avoidance of drinking any liquid or eating taro boiled in water during the period of the flux, the use of hard-timbered trees in the preparation of the appropriate mixture to be drunk by all, including the girl herself, at one stage of the proceedings, and the preservation in the rafters of the hut of the package containing the roots and leaves from which this mixture is prepared, to be hardened by the smoke, and thrown away when a child is desired. In all discussions arising out of the ceremony, and from several different informants, this was the only explanation that was forthcoming, and I see no reason to doubt its validity.

145 841 The usual duration of the menstrual period *irir* (*ira* = blood) among these women would appear to be three days per month. No one reported a semi-monthly period. A few told me that they had it for one or two days only. One case of five days was reported indirectly; I was also told that the woman in question was not in the habit of taking any of the medicines for controlling the flux which appear to be in universal use. Since data of this sort cannot be checked by personal observation, and in view of the vagueness of all these people in regard to any question of time, I feel no great

in order to acquire a wife. Abducted wives are married only in Buka and north Bougainville, but not in the southern regions of the island; it seems that all prisoners are killed there. 436 583 171

At a normal wedding, as far as I could ascertain, there are no further ceremonies. When the purchase is concluded, the man takes the bought woman home with him, and the wife's relatives give a present consisting of cooked food. After about a week the purchaser and his relatives reciprocate. At special weddings, however, certain festivities take place. In European museums one rather frequently finds objects from Buka and north Bougainville that are commonly called "dance clubs." Some of these are illustrated for example in Edge-Partington, Volume I, pages 244 and 245 (with the incorrect heading: "New Britain Archipelago"); Volume II, page 125 (the note to 3 is based on an error). Furthermore, in Schmeltz and Krause, Catalogue of the Museum of Godeffroy, Plate VI, Figures 3 and 3a. Also the dance club from Treasury Island that is depicted in Guppy's work unquestionably diffused from the north. These dance clubs are correctly named, but they are used only for specific ceremonies. If a chieftain gives his daughter to a native in marriage, great festivities are arranged. The participants fashion clubs of this sort, which are called kaisa and vary greatly according to the taste and the skill of the maker. Most frequently the flat clubs have a broad blade that is painted black, white and red, and are ornamented with the characteristic grotesque human figure or only with its head at the upper end. Other dance clubs are shaped like a lancet, in imitation of war clubs, and have triangular or diamond shaped figures that are painted red, white or black on a black or white background. As a rule they are all made of soft wood that is easy to work, but now and then you find them made out of palm wood or some other heavy hardwood. The wedding guests hold the clubs in their hands; groups of dancers surround the couple, sometimes both, sometimes just one of them, and the clubs are alternately held up in the air or stuck in the ground in a circle around the central figure. After a number of different figures have been executed, they throw away the kaisa, or the boys and youths pick them up and sell them to passing ships for a song. For this reason one can occasionally get hold of hundreds of these dance objects in that region without difficulty, whereas at other times it is impossible to acquire even a single one despite the most tempting offer. 585 ● 585 293 [531] 585

When a woman's husband dies in Buka and north Bougainville, she returns to her parents, if they are still alive, or to her closest relatives; 768